

24 May 2022

MN:36/22

Dear Parent

As you may be aware, members of the Independent Education Union will be taking protected industrial action in the form of a full-day stop work across NSW and ACT Catholic systemic schools on Friday 27 May.

School staff, through their union, have five key claims:

- Pay teachers what they're worth
- A fair deal for support staff – pay parity with their colleagues in government schools
- Let teachers teach – cut paperwork
- Allow time to plan
- End staff shortages.

Throughout government and Catholic schools, there is a crippling teacher shortage. Uncompetitive salaries and ever-intensifying administrative workloads mean many teachers are leaving the profession and graduates are not entering it.

Some teachers have taught two classes while standing in a corridor; classes are being combined; many teachers have taken on extra classes well beyond their agreed timetable.

The COVID pandemic did not cause these issues, but it has made them worse. Absences due to illness are much higher and casuals are hard or impossible to find.

Teachers and support staff are burnt out and exhausted. They are dedicated professionals, and they don't take industrial action lightly. The last time they held a full-day stoppage was in 2004.

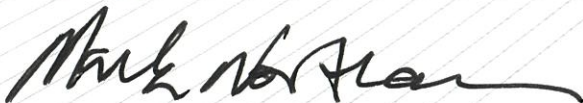
Ultimately, the working conditions of school staff are the learning conditions for your children. In improving one, we substantially improve the other.

The Independent Education Union has been negotiating with Catholic Employment Relations (CER) for a new enterprise agreement for teachers and support staff since January. The full-day stop work is legal and authorised under the strict rules of the Fair Work Commission.

The union members at your school seek your understanding for the action we are taking. School staff care deeply about their students, and they want to improve education for everyone.

Our members appreciate your support.

Yours sincerely



MARK NORTHAM
Secretary